

# CORE VALUES

**A C GROUP STUDY**



**CAVANAUGH CHURCH**  
*... Your Church For Life*



# **CORE VALUES**

**A C GROUP STUDY**

**FALL 2022**

# **OUR MISSION:**

At Cavanaugh Church our mission is to **WIN** people to Christ, **TRAIN** believers to become disciples, and **SEND** disciples out to impact the world.

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# **INTRODUCTION**

## **Cavanaugh Church History**

We began in 1962 as a mission. One year later, Cavanaugh Free Will Baptist Church was officially organized and moved into our original building at 7817 Holly Street in the Cavanaugh community of Fort Smith, Arkansas. We began with 32 charter members and Rev. Dick Shipley as our pastor.

Over the years, our church grew and was blessed. With faith that God would continue to bless us, we purchased land and built a new sanctuary and educational building at 2825 Grinnell Avenue in 1976. The original building now houses our Family Life Center and our childcare ministry, the Cavanaugh Children's Center.

Seven years later, a small gym and fellowship hall were added. This building is now the home of Kid's Territory, where our children worship every week.

In 1992, we began construction on a new 650-seat sanctuary, which now serves as our student ministry worship center. The building also houses four classrooms for small group study. That sanctuary was completed in June of 1993.

We added a 10,000-square-foot Administration and Education Complex in 1999, which has offices for the staff and several classrooms used for events and Bible studies.

In 2011, the church voted to purchase the properties surrounding our campus and construct a new worship center with an expanded parking lot. And in 2020, that God-given dream started to become a reality when we broke ground on our new worship center and Wee Worship area, adding

24,000 square feet and 215 new parking spaces to our campus.

Last year, we launched the It's Our Turn campaign and opened our new, state-of-the-art worship center. Cavanaugh is proud of our rich history of taking bold steps when God calls and serving the River Valley in His name.

**Cavanaugh Church is your church for life!**

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## **What Is a Core Value?**

A core value is a deeply held belief and guiding principle that directs behavior and supports a purpose and vision.

It is very common today for organizations to express their core values. These values do not only specify *what* they do but also *why* they do these things and the *way* they do them.

Values are important for the whole of a culture. A society cannot operate cohesively without some agreement of what is to be valued and what is not.

Do you think a society would crumble without common values? Can you give examples of this happening in history?

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## **Our Values**

The local church is the hope of the world. It is the center of Christ's ongoing redemptive activity in the world. Cavanaugh Church has a responsibility and purpose in this gospel message. Therefore, it is imperative to uphold certain values that unite us in purpose.

Knowing who we are and why we do what we do is extremely important. These core values help Cavanaugh Church make current and future decisions on how we do ministry, how we steward the money and resources entrusted to our care, and how we make an impact on future generations.

Where did these values in this study come from? Why these seven and not others?

In 2020, our pastoral staff started the process of identifying the core values of Cavanaugh Church. We have prayerfully considered and determined that these values most clearly define what is most important to us. These values define our purpose, guide our actions, and are at the heart of who we are. These values have been a part of the life of Cavanaugh Church for many years, and we believe they should be strived toward for years to come.

Our core values are not just words and phrases that sound good or look good on paper. Rather, they are truths from the Bible which guide us in expressing these as our core values.

It is important that all of our church family know and understand these values. It is also important for us to communicate to new attenders who we are and why we do what we do.

This study guide contains truths from God's Word, practical thoughts on our values, and discussion questions for you to process together as a group.



# **SMALL GROUPS**

## **WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES**

# SMALL GROUPS

## What the Bible Teaches

### What Does the Bible Say?

Do you know where you can see the greatest model of unlimited, spontaneous expansion of a local congregation?

Just read the book of **Acts**! The church of Jerusalem gives us the greatest model ever on the explosive growth of the church. In fact, the church's growth described in Acts is nothing short of a miracle.

At the beginning of **Acts 1**, there are 120 believers. By the time we get to **Acts 4**, the number of believers grew to 5,000 men. Most scholars believe that if you add women and children, the church was at least 15,000 strong by this point.

By the time we get to **Acts 21:20**, we learn that there are tens of thousands of believers in the early church. Most scholars believe there were between 50,000 and 100,000 people in the church at this time.

So, in just 25 years, the church grew from 120 to at least 50,000 people.

My first question when I realized this was, "Where in the world did they hold all of these people?"

The Bible tells us in **Acts 5:42**, *"Every day they spent time in the temple and in one home after another. They never stopped teaching and telling the good news that Jesus is the Messiah"* (CEV). They met in large groups for worship and small groups for fellowship. This biblical strategy still works today.

For Cavanaugh Church to be healthy, we must be growing larger and smaller at the same time. What does this mean? We are to grow larger through celebration services and worship, and smaller through your small groups.

What did these first small groups do? Think about all of that explosive growth. Whatever they did, we should do, too!

The Bible gives us the answers in **Acts 2:42-47**:

*“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”*

**They grew spiritually.**

Verse 42 says, *“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching”* (NIV). It appears the apostles were teaching in the temple courts on Sunday, and the people were studying their teachings in greater depth in their homes. As they did so, the people grew in spiritual maturity.

**They spent time in fellowship.**

The Bible says, *“They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts”* (Acts 2:46, NIV). The early church gathered together in homes to eat and develop relationships with one another.

### **They worshiped.**

They devoted themselves “*to the breaking of bread and to prayer*” and they were “*praising God*” (Acts 2:42, 47, NIV). These early small groups participated in communion and worshiped together.

### **They ministered to one another.**

The Bible says, “*They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need*” (Acts 2:45, NIV). Home groups became an outlet for support; they helped one another in practical ways by meeting needs.

### **They evangelized the lost.**

Acts 2:47 says, “*The Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved*” (NIV). If people were coming to faith in Christ daily, that means the church saw at least 365 conversions a year! That only happens if these groups are engaging in their God-given mission of sharing the Good News.

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## **Live It Out**

These small groups in Acts were a microcosm of the greater church. They were fulfilling the purposes of the church: worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, evangelism, generosity, and unity.

Our goal at Cavanaugh Church is for each member to be involved in a small group that is modeling the ministry of our church.

A healthy church has healthy groups!

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## **Discussion Questions**

- 1. Personally, how do you hope to benefit from being involved in a small group?**
  
- 2. What are some ways your small group can grow in fellowship and community during this eight-week period?**
  
- 3. What are some practical ways your group can minister to those in need?**
  
- 4. Who can your group pray for that needs to be saved?**



**TRUTH**

**GOD'S WORD CHANGES  
EVERYTHING**

# TRUTH

## God's Word Changes Everything

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

We believe that it is important for us to form habits that help us grow spiritually. Spiritual disciplines help us to become more like Christ. God's Word is the foundation for those disciplines.

At Cavanaugh, we value reading, studying, teaching, learning from, and talking about the Bible. The Bible is essential to spiritual growth. It is the very bread of life.

*Deuteronomy 6:6-7 says, "These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."*

It is clear from God's Word that we must keep scripture on our minds at all times. It's not just reserved for sermons or even Bible study. Everywhere we go, in every aspect of life, scripture should be on our minds.

As we interact with scripture, we seek not only to know the truth but to live it out. The Bible shapes the way we do ministry and how we interact with one another.

The Bible is our rule of faith and practice. We can't live without it, and we depend on it in every situation.

*Matthew 7:24 says, "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock."*



How does obedience to God's Word help us when life is hard?

**2 Peter 3:18** says, *“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”*

The apostle Peter charged the church with the call to grow in grace and knowledge. We must grow in the truth. It's not an option. It's required for every believer. And the longer we are believers, the more grace we should exhibit and the more knowledge of Jesus we should obtain.

Everything we teach aligns with scripture and leads to growth in the knowledge of Jesus. It is our desire to teach the Bible in a way that all can understand and apply to their lives.

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** says, *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

Instead of giving advice based on our own opinions and experiences, we teach what the Bible says. It is the source of life and a much better instructor. The ability of our church to meet the needs of its people is largely determined by our adherence to the truths from God's Word.

**Read Matthew 4:1-11:**

*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”*

*Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”*

*Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written:*

*“‘He will command his angels concerning you,  
and they will lift you up in their hands,  
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’”*

*Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”*

*Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”*

*Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”*

*Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.*

**How did Jesus respond to temptation in the wilderness? Why did Jesus respond to Satan in this way?**

## **Live It Out**

We encourage every member of our church to receive regular, biblical instruction. Together we study the Bible and search for answers to life's circumstances.

We also encourage every believer to develop a habit of reading God's Word every day. This small time commitment will impact your life more than any other activity you can do. You will never regret the time you spend reading and studying God's Word.

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## **Discussion Questions**

- 1. Are you a naturally disciplined person? Do you struggle with spiritual disciplines like prayer, Bible reading, etc.?**
- 2. What impact does your personal devotional life have on Cavanaugh Church?**
- 3. Why should you read the Bible? Is there a difference between “reading” and “studying” the Bible?**
- 4. How do we provide biblical training at Cavanaugh Church?**
- 5. Do you find it easy or difficult to memorize scripture? Why is it important?**
- 6. Do you feel competent to share God’s Word with others? How can you continue to grow in this area?**

**SEEKING**

**LOST PEOPLE MATTER  
TO GOD**

# SEEKING

## Lost People Matter to God

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

At Cavanaugh Church, we believe that evangelism is one of our most important purposes in life; therefore, we must discipline ourselves to carry out this biblical command.

According to evangelist Bill Bright, “Only 2% of Christians in America share their faith regularly with non-believers.”

**James 4:17** tell us, *“Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it, sins.”*

Imagine that you have the cure to cancer. How would you share that with the world? What if you kept the cure to yourself and didn’t share it with anyone? What would people do if they found out that you didn’t share the cure with anyone?

We have the cure to the deadly disease that is sin. Every person on earth is affected by it, and the sacrifice of Jesus can heal them. Spreading the gospel of Jesus is much more urgent than finding the cure to cancer because it is an issue of eternal death or eternal life.

Let’s discover three habits for everyday evangelism and answer the question, “How can we grow in our readiness to share Christ?”

**1. Pray that Jesus would open doors for you to share His Word, and then take advantage of the opportunity.**

*Colossians 4:2-6 says, “Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”*

What principles can we apply to our efforts in everyday evangelism? List as many principles as you can.

In his book *Operation Multiplication*, Billy Hanks, Jr., writes, “After extended observation we have concluded that effective, lifestyle evangelism takes place when a Christian specifically prays each morning asking for opportunities to witness... Do you know why Christians aren’t leading more people to the Savior? We aren’t asking daily for opportunities to share our faith!”

And in *Just Walk Across the Room*, Bill Hybels writes, “You would not believe the corresponding ratio between the number of times I pray for an open door and the number of times God swings one loose. Uncanny... Imagine what would happen if every single morning everyone of us prayed fervently that God would open doors for us that day!”

Do you think praying for open doors is a prayer God would want to answer? What do you think is the relationship between your prayer life and taking advantage of open doors?

## Read John 4:34-38:

*“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.”*

How does this passage apply to this first habit of looking for open doors? On a scale from 1 to 10, how would you rate yourself on the ability to notice open doors? How can you improve or maintain this?

Bill Bright said, “Whenever I am alone with a person for a few minutes, I assume that I am there by divine appointment.”

Taking advantage of an open door can look like many things: making a new friend, building a deeper friendship, inviting them to hang out, serving them, identifying with Christ, sharing your testimony, inviting them to church or Bible study, sharing a nugget of truth, setting up a gospel appointment, or sharing the whole gospel. Remember, when it comes to evangelism, something is better than nothing!

Considering the above list, what open doors have you had in the past few days? What could be some potential “divine appointments” that might happen to you on a regular basis? How could you take advantage of them?



**2. Develop an impact list of 5-10 people. Use the “Prayer, Care, Share” strategy.**

Prayer: **John 16:23-24** says, *“In that day you will no longer ask me anything. Very truly I tell you, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”*

What principles about praying for our friends can we draw from this passage? What are some practical ways that we can remember to pray for our lost friends? Write down your ideas.

Care: **1 John 3:16-18** says, *“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”*

What principles about caring for others can we apply from this passage? What are some practical ways you can show your lost friends that you care for them?

Share: **Romans 10:13-15** says, *“...for, ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’”*

Why is it so important that our lost friends actually hear the gospel? What are some things that might keep you from initiating contact with friends on your impact list?

Make a list of all the non-Christians in your immediate circle of influence. Pick out 5-10 people to put on your impact list that you want to pray for everyday, serve in humility, and share Jesus with.

### **3. Plan regularly to spend time with your non-Christian friends.**

Howard Hendricks said, “It takes most new Christians about three years to eliminate all the non-Christians from their lives.”

In **John 17:15**, Jesus said of his disciples, *“My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.”*

What stood out to you from the quotes above?

#### **Read Matthew 9:9-13:**

*As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “Follow me,” he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples.*

*When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”*

*On hearing this, Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”*

What can we learn from the example set by Jesus?

## **Live It Out**

Pray daily for God to open doors for you to share your own personal story of how God saved you.

Pray for unsaved friends, care for them, and share the Good News.

Make it a habit to invite people to Cavanaugh Church so they can experience God and hear the message of salvation.

When God opens a door for you to share your faith with others, just tell them your story and then share with them the simple plan of salvation. At Cavanaugh Church we believe that salvation is as simple as A, B, C:

- Admit you are a sinner.
- Believe Jesus can save you.
- Confess Jesus as Lord of your life.

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## **Discussion Questions**

1. Why do you think many Christians don't have a bigger sense of urgency to share the gospel?

2. Read the following quotes:

"I'm convinced that the main reason many of us don't witness for Christ in ways that would be effective and relatively fear free is simply because we don't discipline ourselves to do it."

—Donald Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*

"It doesn't matter how high and holy our world changing intentions are if we don't have time to carry them out."

—Christopher Adsit, *Personal Disciple-making*

What stands out to you in the quotes above?

3. Read Ephesians 5:15-16:

*"Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil."*

How does this passage from apply to making evangelism a spiritual discipline?

4. Who can your C Group pray for that needs the Lord?

# **RELATIONSHIPS**

**WE'RE NOT MEANT  
TO DO LIFE ALONE**

# RELATIONSHIPS

## We're Not Meant to Do Life Alone

### What Does the Bible Say?

We believe in the trinity: God, the Father; Jesus Christ, the Son; and the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches us that He is three persons in one God. He has always been, and always will be, in relationship.

We, as His creation, are meant to be in relationship, too. We read in the creation account in **Genesis 2:18**, *“It is not good for man to be alone.”* God created man, then woman, and He desired to have a relationship with them.

Our first and foremost relationship should be a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

**1 John 1:9** says, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”*

It is as simple as A, B, C. Admits your sin, believe in Jesus as your Savior, and confess Jesus as your Savior and Lord. All other healthy relationships stem from getting this one right.

We can only expect to grow healthy relationships between husband and wife, between parent and child, and between friends as we build on our personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The remainder of this study is based on the assumption that the reader has placed their faith in Jesus Christ and has a personal relationship with Him.

Based on the knowledge that God desires to have a relationship with us and that we should have relationships with one another, what should we do?

God's message is clear: Love God. Love others.

Read **Matthew 22:36-39**:

*“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”*

*Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”*

**John 13:35** says, *“By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

And **1 John 4:7-11** says, *“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”*

Let's look at six biblical and practical ways we are to love one another and build relationships:

### **1. Bear one another's burdens.**

**Galatians 6:2** says, *“Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”*

We all know what it's like to struggle to lift something heavy and carry it. If someone comes along and offers to help us carry the weight, the load becomes much lighter. More manageable. Bearable.

It's the same principle in building relationships. We show love to others when we make ourselves available and offer to help carry what is weighing them down. Their load becomes much lighter. More manageable. Bearable. By being there, we are reducing their weight and helping them through their trials.

Have you experienced a time when someone helped carry your burden? How did it make you feel?

## **2. Encourage one another.**

**Romans 12:15** says, *“Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.”*

**1 Thessalonians 5:11** says, *“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”*

We are to be present for one another, genuinely happy when one is happy and moved with compassion when one is sad.

We love others by encouraging them. When we encourage someone, we give them courage, support, and hope. We help them go through their trials and keep moving forward. A word of encouragement can make a huge difference in others' lives.

Do you know someone who is an encourager? How much effort does it take to become an encourager as opposed to a discourager?

## **3. Pray for one another.**

**James 5:16** says, *“Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The urgent request of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect.”*

And **Colossians 3:13** tells us that we are to always be, *“bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against*



*another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.”*

These verses teach us that we are to confess, pray, and forgive. We show love by praying for others, friends and enemies alike. When you lift others before God, it shows you think about them, care about their needs, and want the best for them.

Just as Abraham stood in the gap and prayed for Sodom, and just as Moses stood in the gap and interceded for the Israelites, we should stand in the gap for those God has placed in our circle of influence.

Have you stood in the gap for someone? Has someone ever stood in the gap for you?

#### **4. Be a challenger.**

**Hebrews 10:24-25** says, *“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*

Everyone needs a cheerleader in their corner at one point or another. While we live our busy, hectic lives, it is easy to become unbalanced. Sometimes we can get our priorities out of alignment.

When we have fellow believers doing life with us, they can be our challenger; they can encourage us to keep up the good fight, choose right, and not forget to put Christ first in our lives and the lives of our families.

Can you name a time someone was a godly challenger for you?

## **5. Grow in spiritual things.**

When we build relationships with other believers, we can learn from them, and they can learn from us.

God doesn't waste anything we have experienced in our lives. God can help us grow spiritually in any way He chooses. Sometimes it's through the written Word, the Bible. Other times, we find exactly what we need through a sermon. Often, though, God will put people in our path who have gone through something similar to what we're experiencing.

The point is that you have something to offer someone else. The following scriptures offer a few examples of how we can help one another grow spiritually.

### **Elders teach the younger.**

The elders are to lead by example. Read **Titus 2:2-8**.

### **Warn each other of sin.**

Read **Galatians 6:1**, **1 Thessalonians 5:14**, and **1 Peter 3:17-18**.

### **Act humbly.**

Read **Philippians 2:5-8**.

Loving others means putting them above yourself. C.S. Lewis said, "Humility is not thinking less of you, but thinking of you less."

You can act humbly toward others by being considerate, being a good listener, being slow to cast blame on others, acknowledging that you're not always right, and being willing to receive help.

## **6. Serve others.**

Jesus says in **Mark 10:45**, *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

**1 Peter 4:10** says, *“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”*

**Romans 12:13** commands us, *“Share with the saints in their needs; pursue hospitality.”*

And **Hebrews 13:16** says, *“Don’t neglect to do what is good and to share, for God is pleased with such sacrifices.”*

To love others is to serve them. We express love to others when we do things for them without expecting anything in return—things we may not like to do, and things that may cost or inconvenience us. When you love, you serve.

In what practical ways can this group serve others?

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## **Live It Out**

Cavanaugh Church believes the primary way that we as Christians live in community is by belonging to the church and supporting one another within a small group setting.

In our self-serving society, many of us feel alone. Sometimes we are literally alone, and other times we simply feel lonely. Because of societal trends, we may perceive we are better off on our own—detached, secluded—and believe we really don't need others.

But Scripture emphasizes the truth that we were created for relationships. God didn't create us to live in solitude, but rather to live life with others.

We recognize that God has designed us to be together. We bear one another's burdens, encourage one another, pray for each other, challenge each other, grow spiritually, and serve one another.

While we have great community together on Sundays, we also see community happening at an even deeper level in small groups and at places and times we deliberately engage one another in meaningful relationship. The key is to become more intentional in our desire to connect with others.

We have become conditioned by our culture to communicate through Facebook, Snapchat, texting, etc., and in the process, we have isolated ourselves from personal contact with others. But we can learn to be generous with our time and resources. Our desire at Cavanaugh is to see everyone cared for and caring for others.

Here are some practical ways to live out our church's core value of relationships. (These suggestions are intended to spark conversation in your group.)

- Set aside time to make an actual phone call to someone in need of relationship.
- Invite someone for coffee to have a face-to-face conversation and begin to build a friendship.
- Invite someone to sit with you at church.
- Go to a sporting event with someone.
- Sit at the hospital with someone.
- Take dinner to someone who's sick.
- Take someone to lunch after church... You pay!

List some practical ways your group can build relationships with others.

List some practical way you, as an individual or couple, can build relationships with others.

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## **Discussion Questions**

- 1. Read Acts 2:42-47. What does the scripture tell us about the Christians in this passage? What do you think caused them to be so committed to one another? How do you think our relationships differ today?**
  
- 2. How is our modern world counter-relational, and what can we do to show love to those around us as Christ did during His time on Earth?**
  
- 3. Some of us are social; others not as much. Some of us are private; others not as much. Some love to share; others not as much. In some relationships, Christ may be the only common denominator. How do we get past our differences and build relationships?**
  
- 4. Why do you think people are willing to come to church (a big group setting) but are uncomfortable with building relationships in a small group setting? What can Cavanaugh do to change that mentality?**
  
- 5. Why might people feel unwelcome or uncomfortable in small groups? What would you suggest as a remedy?**
  
- 6. How do you plan to be intentional about building relationships with other believers? List specific ways.**

**SERVING**

**WE'RE STRONGER WHEN  
EVERYONE SERVES**

# SERVING

We're Stronger When Everyone Serves

## What Does the Bible Say?

God has given each of us gifts. These gifts aren't meant to be used for our own glory, though. They are to be used to build up the church. At Cavanaugh, we encourage everyone to use their gifts in service to the body of Christ, the church.

*1 Peter 4:10 says, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."*

*Philippians 2:3-4 says, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."*

Serving is putting the needs of others ahead of our own. It's looking out for the interests of others and using our gifts to benefit them. Meaning in life is found in serving rather than in self-centeredness.

Read Mark 10:35-45:

*Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask."*

*"What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.*

*They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."*



*“You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?”*

*“We can,” they answered.*

*Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.”*

*When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

Jesus served humanity by giving up His life in order that others might be saved. He said that He did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.

We believe that ministry in Jesus’ name should be expressed in concrete ways through the local church. This is one of the distinguishing characteristics of a church: expressing the love of Christ to each other and to the community.

**Read John 13:1-17:**

*It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.*

*The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.*

*He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"*

*Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."*

*"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."*

*Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."*

*"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"*

*Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.*

*When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”*

Discuss the example of Jesus washing the disciples’ feet. Have you ever participated in a feet washing? What is the significance of washing someone’s feet?

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## **Live It Out**

When we approach the church as a consumer—that is, only to get our needs met—we are in a solitary mode of being. But when we reject the consumer mindset, serving will draw us out of ourselves and into meaningful relationships.

There is a fulfillment and joy in seeing others touched through you, or seeing something great happen through the part you play in the body of Christ.

**Galatians 6:10** says, *“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”*

It is our desire that everyone in the church use their unique gifting to build up the church and make a difference in our community, our nation, and our world.

**Romans 12:4-5** says, *“For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”*

Each one of you has special gifts and should use them to serve others. You are uniquely wired to serve God in the way that He wants you to. You can encourage each other to serve individually, and you can leverage your collective gifts to serve together.

One of the essential elements of serving is the ability to care. At Cavanaugh, we care by giving out groceries weekly through our Food Bank, by preparing and serving meals twice a month at Hope Campus, and in many other ways.

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## **Discussion Questions**

1. What happens if we don't put our faith in action? What keeps us from putting faith in action?

2. Do you know what your spiritual gifts are? Have you ever taken a class on spiritual gifts?

3. What are some of the specific areas Cavanaugh offers for you to use your spiritual gifts?

4. How can we encourage more people to get involved and use their gifts at Cavanaugh?



# **GENEROSITY**

**YOU CAN'T OUTGIVE GOD**

# GENEROSITY

## You Can't Outgive God

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

Cavanaugh Church values generosity, and that is demonstrated through what we do and the ministries we support. Many of our members practice generosity; this is demonstrated by their sacrificial giving.

This value is based on the teachings from the Bible. Just as Jesus gave Himself for us, we freely give of ourselves, our time, and our money to others.

**Philippians 2:5** says, *“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”*

Being conformed to the image of Christ includes emulating His sacrificial, giving nature. Our generosity (or lack thereof) can be used as a gauge for our own spiritual health.

**Matthew 6:19-21** says, *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

Jesus challenges us with a choice: Accumulate stuff here on earth (which ultimately has no value), or freely give of what God has given us and invest in the coming Kingdom.

The key to living a life of generosity is in having a heart that delights in the Lord. When we find our purpose and joy in conforming to Christ's image, we shed the inclination to indulge in materialistic things.



**Read Proverbs 11:24-25:**

*One person gives freely, yet gains even more;  
another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.  
A generous person will prosper;  
whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.*

**Then read Luke 6:38:**

*Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.*

**Now read 2 Corinthians 9:6-8:**

*Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.*

What is God's promise to us when we give freely and generously? What happens when we try to guard and keep what God has given to us?

**Finally, read Luke 21:1-4:**

*As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. "Truly I tell you," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."*

Is true generosity measured by how much you give? What is the foundation for giving?

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## **Live It Out**

We are generous with others because God has been so generous with us. We encourage everyone to be generous in three ways: time, gifts (that is, spiritual gifts), and money.

We offer dozens of ways you can be generous with your time throughout the year. You can serve in the nursery, assist with guest follow-up, or help prepare meals for the homeless.

We also have many opportunities for you to be generous with your gifts. You can serve on the security team, welcome first time guests, or teach a class.

As we saw earlier, being generous with your money is an indication of your heart. We invite you to financially support our church, our missionaries, and other ministries we partner with because it's an opportunity for you to give back to God and be a part of what He is doing in the River Valley and around the world.

List the ways that you believe Cavanaugh demonstrates the value of generosity.

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## **Discussion Questions**

1. Is there a correlation between a person's generosity and the degree to which they've been forgiven?
2. How do you overcome the tendency to keep things for yourself and not give generously?
3. What is the true motivation of a generous person?
4. How would you respond to the person who says, "I don't like going to church. All they ever talk about is money"?
5. Other than through finances, what are ways a person can be generous?
6. It's easy to help those we love. How do you feel about helping those who you don't like?



**UNITY**

**WE'RE BETTER TOGETHER**

# UNITY

## We're Better Together

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

*Psalm 133:1 says, "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity."*

*Jesus says in John 17:22, "I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one."*

**Read Ephesians 4:1-6:**

*"As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."*

When we see something work as intended, it's a good thing! The Bible is very clear: The church is one body with one Spirit and a hope that unites us all.

The church, which is the body and bride of Christ, is composed of people who share in common Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. We as the body share in community and build relationships with one another, as we have studied previously.

We are not only called to experience and grow in community with one another, but we're also ordained by God to function in one accord to see Christ known to all people. We are called to be unified as one, and we accomplish this in our behavior towards one another, in how we serve together, and in our corporate worship of our Heavenly Father.

We love God, and we love people. As the church, we should have utmost care and respect for one another. We should each make it our own personal passion to pursue an atmosphere conducive to encouraging one another to be unified under the Lordship of Jesus. As we do this, we can faithfully serve and worship as intended.

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## **Live It Out**

Read together about our behavior towards one another:

**1 Peter 3:8** says, *“Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.”*

**1 Corinthians 1:9-10** tells us, *“God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.”*

**Romans 12:16** commands us, *“Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.”*

In **Romans 14:1**, we’re called to, *“Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters.”*

And **Ephesians 4:32** encourages us to, *“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”*

We want to ensure that our bonds are strong and that there are no divisions among us. And if divisions and disagreements do happen, we are quick to resolve our issues and forgive one another.

We all have different personalities and ways of doing things, and we each have our own responsibility to abide by and follow the will of God for our lives. Nevertheless, our commonality in Christ should always be stronger than our personal opinions, preferences, or differences.



## **Discussion Questions**

1. Why is unity so important among believers?

2. From the scriptures above, can your group compile a list of attributes the Bible gives that describe a unified church?

3. The attitudes of humility, gentleness, and patience are required for unity in the church. Which do you struggle with the most?

4. Unity is given by the Holy Spirit to us. But on the other hand, unity is something that we must work hard to maintain. What are some personal practices or group disciplines that would help to preserve unity in our church?

5. What are some ways to encourage fellow believers to, as **Ephesians 4:3** encourages us, “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace”?



**EXCELLENCE**

**WE GIVE GOD OUR BEST**

# EXCELLENCE

## We Give God Our Best

### **What Does the Bible Say?**

Cavanaugh values excellence in everything we do. We aren't perfect, but we strive to do everything to the best of our ability because that's what God deserves.

Striving for excellence fosters creativity and minimizes frustration. It allows for people to thrive and utilize their gifts to their fullest potential. We encourage everyone to bring their best to the table because when we do, we are worshiping our creator.

He has created us in His image, and He desires for us to offer our best to Him in everything. This is worship.

**Colossians 3:23-24** says, *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”*

In keeping with the biblical value of spiritual growth, we often find in Scripture the call to excel in Christian character.

Read the following verses and discuss how excellence and spiritual maturity go hand in hand.

**Philippians 4:8** says, *“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things.”*

**2 Corinthians 8:7** says, *“But since you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you – see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”*

Read **Matthew 22:37-38**:

*Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.”*

What is the greatest commandment? Can you love God with all your heart without giving your best?

**1 Corinthians 10:31** says, *“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”*

Everything we attempt in life should be done “as to the Lord.” God is pleased when His children use the resources and wisdom He’s given them to create beautiful things.

We value excellence because it brings glory to God. It exalts the name of Jesus. And it attracts people to learn more about Him.

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## **Live It Out**

Describe a recent event at Cavanaugh that you think was done with excellence.

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## **Discussion Questions**

- 1. Is there anything, good or bad, in the way our church pursues excellence?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2. Is there anything wrong with just getting things done?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3. Are there areas where it's more important to pursue excellence than others?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4. What's the difference between pursuing excellence and pursuing perfection?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5. How can you help foster a mindset of excellence in the areas you currently serve?**